

Transition in early years:

A guide to help professional practitioners during early years transition



<https://montessorirocks.org/value-of-play-for-young-children/>

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Introduction

This helpful handbook can be a guide for professional practitioners to use during transition for children in an early year setting, it will include information on many aspects particularly on the role of the adult, needs of the child, partnerships that could potentially be included, any interventions and proposed outcomes, one will also discuss previous theories and how they have shaped our current way of thinking.

What is transition?

Children and young people travel through transitions when they go from household to an early learning and childcare (ELC) setting, then onto primary school, from classroom to classroom, between schools, as well as from secondary school to higher education and far beyond. (Parent zone Scotland, 2022)

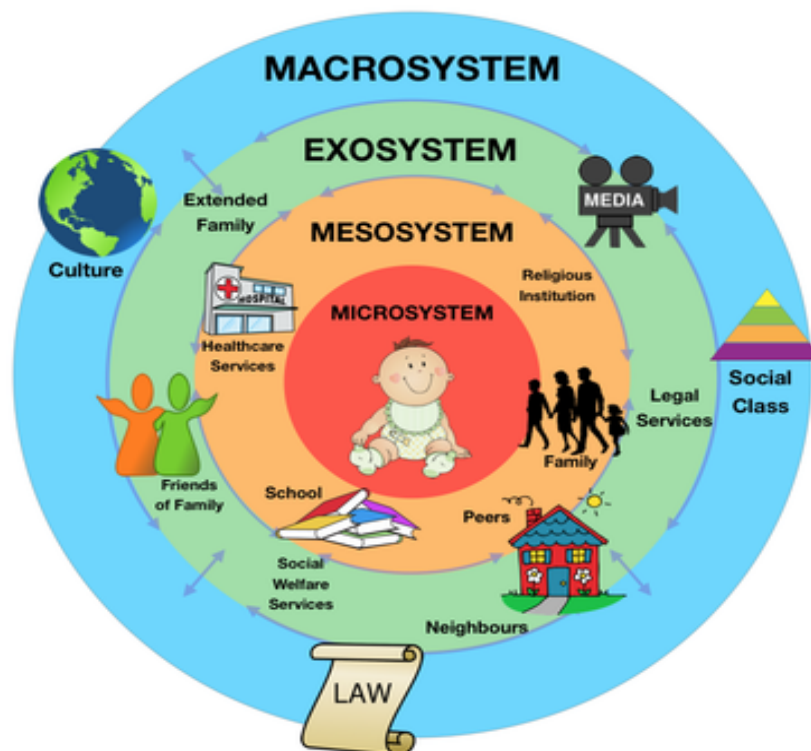
A transition is any modification or change that significantly affects a child's way of life. Every phase of our lives involves transitions, both large and minor, planned and unforeseen. Each shift affects people differently on a variety of levels.

Transitions may be based around something exciting, like beginning a new job or adding a family member or as an opposite a sudden family bereavement or parental breakdown could affect the child negatively or there might just be difficulties there during transition where extra continued support and guidance may be needed, supporting this the Mentally Healthy Schools (2020) the transition period must be carefully managed for all children and young people, whether they are starting primary school, switching schools, or moving into a new year group.

The well-being and academic performance of a child may suffer if they have difficulty making a change.

Although there have been continuous efforts to characterise and explain the transitioning experience, Bronfenbrenner's (1979) theoretical explanation has proven to be the most useful to professionals and academics.

Bronfenbrenner (1979) understood that several elements of a growing child's life interact with and have an impact on the child. His research considered broader influencing elements and the context (or ecology) of development in addition to individual development. Based on these dynamic interactions that the settings have on the growing child, he established the "Ecological Systems Theory."



<http://psychologydos.weebly.com/uploads/4/5/8/1/45813913/9312028.png?386>

Now consider how this applies to young children in an early childhood setting, the way it may affect them could be amplified, therefore following this handbook may give the reader a greater understanding on how to better assist early years children during this transition.

Role of the adult

The role of the adult is of high importance in order to support children in early years during transition and multiple factors could be considered such as: -

Communication

Early years exchanges between children lay the important groundwork for later language and cognitive development, it is essential that they have numerous, high-quality conversations with parents and teachers throughout the course of their day in a linguistically diverse environment.

GOV.UK (2022) States that practitioners as well as their parents can efficiently develop children's language by making comments on the things that the children are interested in or doing, and then repeating what they say while incorporating new words.

Early years children will have the chance to succeed if you read to them routinely, engage them actively in storytelling, songs, and poems, but then offer them plenty of chances to utilise and incorporate new words in a variety of contexts.

This is also very similar to Early years matters (2022) who say that from birth humans are naturally social beings who love to interact and communicate, babies will respond to communication from adults by cooing, smiling, laughing and

mirroring, as babies progress into early years children and cognitive learning increases children will then better understand and try to respond verbally.

As adults, whilst communicating with children it is also important to consider that not all children will understand verbally, consider visual, aural, read/written and kinesthetics (VARK).

These four styles were proposed by Fleming and Mills (1992) and appear to mirror both child and teacher learning experiences. Despite considerable overlap, they are defined in the manner below:

- Visual – Where a child or student may learn better through visual stimulation, an example can be seeing or being shown a problem visually.
- Aural – Some may find they have a better understanding and learning experience through aural teaching.
- Read / Writing – Another form of learning can also come through reading materials as well as writing.
- Kinesthetics – Similar to a mix of the previous 3 all though learning is from such things as group activities

Equally as important is the communication between the practitioner and the parent or guardian, as Burnham (2016) says that as practitioners there needs to be clarity amongst all in ones setting, due to the importance of the roles there should be a close togetherness as a team to support each individual child equally.

Burnham (2016) goes on to say that examining the job structure inside the organisation, if it is unclear to oneself ask a supervisor or manager to explain it, so oneself may better understand how the function and the responsibilities of others fit together. The annual evaluation is a good opportunity to check in, notably if there have been personnel adjustments at the school or nursery.

In addition to following Burnham (2016) it may be beneficial to support it with the World of work (2021) who developed the seven C's structure which is a set of guidelines known as the "seven C's of communication" should be followed in all forms of communication.

They are there to make sure the person being spoken to understands what is being said. The seven C's stand for courteous, clear, accurate, complete, concrete, and complete.

Observation

According to the Welsh Assembly Government (2008) observation is a crucial component of one's profession because it helps professionals comprehend the unique requirements of every child in one's care. As is known each child is different and unique in their own individual way. Children's play provides practitioners with the opportunity to discover and appreciate each child's special features.

It is important as adults that we observe the children as much as possible as every child is different and may learn differently in order to help, adjust and be as flexible as possible to make the transition into an early year setting as smooth as possible.

Needs of the child

Due to the COVID 19 pandemic the needs of children are at its highest due to the amount of time lost in an Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) setting and lack of social interaction, according to the UK Parliament (2021) the information available shows that pre-school children's social, emotional, and behavioural development as well as their mental health, physical development, and preparedness for school have all been impacted by changes in access to ECEC. Evidence does, however, also imply that families and children experienced the epidemic in very varied ways, which has impacted any influences on development, both good and bad.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1943) shows the needs of that what is needed perfectly well, in a depiction of a triangle shape it shows that it has 5 levels of achievement or fulfilment and that the needs start from the lower levels and once achieved the level above would then be needed.

As can be seen a child would needs the basics for survival such as air, water, shelter, clothing once achieved the child would then need a sense of safety or security, then onto a feeling that the child is loved and wanted and then it is important self-esteem is built in order for a desire to become independent learners and the best they can be in doing so.



Simply Phycology (2018)

Similar to Maslow's hierarchy of needs (1943) the Children's Hospital Colorado (2022) states that the eight things a child needs to thrive are as follows:

1. Security
2. Stability
3. Consistency
4. Emotional support
5. Love
6. Education
7. Positive role models
8. Structure

Gov.uk (2022) goes on to say due to the likelihood that this will be the child's first exposure with schooling outside of the family, your role in providing for children is particularly crucial. Every child should have a positive, secure, and inclusive experience here, Every Child has the right to the best education that upholds high

standards, is suitable for their requirements, and enables them to realise their full potential and achieve the best results.

Fabian, H & Dunlop, A-W (2002) Declare that early childhood service providers have a duty of care to ensure that their programmes enhance rather than impair children's potential due to these shifting environments. This entails giving careful consideration to the child's experience when they move between an increasing variety of settings during their early years and understanding that the child does have a voice that one must listen to and understand, in order to help them thrive or grow into independent learners.

Reggio Emilia early learning centre (2021) states that under Reggio Emilia, teachers plan the lessons but adapt in real time. This is a luxury afforded to the philosophy due to the lack of a curriculum. Because of the focus on collaboration, classroom learning, and projects are typically completed as a group. Similarly, this collaboration is also seen between the teacher and student where children are encouraged to steer towards learning and about whatever piques their interest.

The current curriculum in Wales is very much a Reggio Emilia approach with blended learning, a new empathises on projects and working as a group whilst also trying to get children outside to learn with nature, similar to the Scandinavian approach all though not to that detail, early years setting teachers would greatly benefit from getting children outdoors to learn through nature and keeping children engaged.

Partnerships

Investing in a child's growth requires a partnership at its core. To make sure a clear transition plan has been established for the child, it is essential that everyone work jointly in the child's best interests. Relevant intervention programs that can influence a child's transition can be made possible by collaborating with a range of other agencies and parents.

Studocu (2017) Since parents and caregivers are the ones who know their children the best and together can offer a higher level of support for the child and their specific requirements, it is crucial to work in conjunction with them during the school transition.

Parents:

Birthto5matters (no date) say that when parents and professionals collaborate to allow children make stronger bonds to the world around them and to cultivate a love of learning can partnerships with parents be genuinely effective. No family or parent should be left out of this process. When it comes to their personal job of promoting their child's wellness, growth, and learning, parents must feel valued, listened to, and trusted.

Birthto5matters (no date) goes further by stating early childhood educators must prioritise engaging with parents and acknowledge parents' dedication to their children's early development and education.

The Welsh Government (2021) concurs by stating in addition, communications with parents and caregivers makes sure parents are kept in the loop, are aware of the development their child is achieving, and are able to assist learning, providing

parents, caregivers, and adult learners with feedback that explains the progress each learner is making, as well as their needs for future advancement and how those might be supported.

According to Stars childcare group (2022) A partnership is defined under the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework as "parents, families, and practitioners working together for the benefit of children." A successful partnership requires commitment from all parties involved and is based on trust, openness, and accountability.

There are several partnerships that must be considered or thought of during the transition process for any child in an early year setting during transition and parents are just one of many, one can also consider.

<https://ev681group7.wordpress.com/>



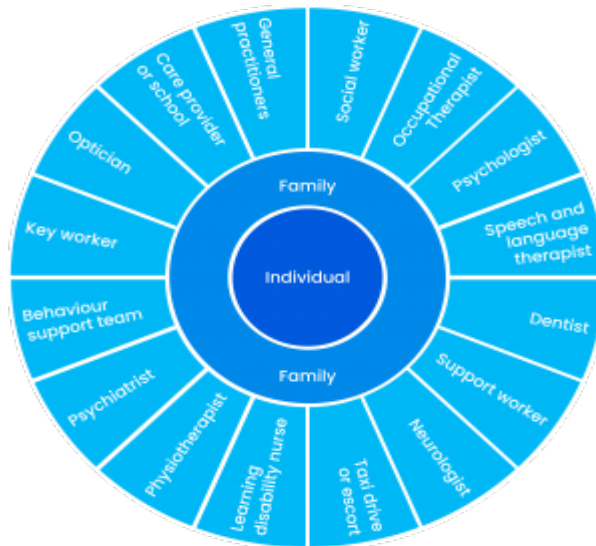
The illustration above is a great illustration of how everyone should collaborate and share knowledge to develop an integrated strategy rather than a disjointed one.

Early years matters (2022) go on to say that the agreements made about data sharing and confidentiality govern how partners collaborate and as a result, any information is delivered only to those who need it.

Working together has many advantages, including enabling all families to exchange information about their children's growth or learning and enabling those with special needs to receive unified help.

Oneself agrees that all data that is shared must only be on a need to know basis in order to protect the child and not break general protection data regulations (GDPR), however as Early years matters (2022) says all information shared should be clear, concise and helpful information that will only benefit the child who may potentially be struggling, some children may have additional learning needs in which case being open with information would only benefit the child learning.

The image below depicts a wide range of further partnerships that may potentially be involved within a child's early years transition and should be considered, each as equally as important as the next:



The challenging behaviour foundation (2022)

The challenging behaviour foundation (2022) state that a person with a potential learning disability and their family can get a variety of professional recommendations, which evolve with time. Families should manage interactions among all of this assistance and maintain contact with everyone. Family caregivers believe that new professionals will be helpful, person and family centred, sensitive, informed and understanding.

Interventions

Identifying means of interventions will always be challenging however with support from outside partnerships, parents and guardians hopefully transitioning can be smooth and any issues or challenges can then be tackled head on accordingly. Going back to previously mentioned the world of work (2021) and using there are seven C's structure which is a set of guidelines known as the "seven C's of communication" should be followed in all forms of communication.

They are there to make sure the person being spoken to understands what is being said to help them with everyday activities. The seven C's stand for courteous, clear, accurate, complete, concrete, and complete.

Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (2022) note that infants and young children with learning disability and impairments, as well as their families, can take advantage of a variety of early education services and supports.

Depending on the requirements of both the child and caregiver, may involve speech therapy, physical therapy, and other sorts of treatments. If an intervention is not made at an early year stage setting it may significantly affect a child's capacity to pick up new skills, build confidence, and boost achievement in both school and throughout life.

Proposed Outcomes

One would hope that all adolescents would eventually establish relationships, pick up new habits, and come to feel safe, connected, and at home in the new environment. Positive early years adjustments can establish the fundamental groundwork for future academic performance and provide long-lasting advantages.

HFL Education (2022) says there will always be situations that develop that were unanticipated, despite all the meticulous planning and preparation. This would be an excellent moment to evaluate the procedures you implemented to promote seamless transitions and to consider any improvements that might be made.

Adding to HFL Education (2022) one would agree that the practitioner must always be flexible and able to adapt to any change that may occur in the early year setting in order to make the transition as smooth as possible, ensuring that the child's needs are always met.

A child's healthy growth and wellness depend on their ability to successfully navigate transitions in their early year settings, which can also help them learn more and achieve greater academic results later in life.

Similar to adults, children need to learn, explore, and thrive most efficiently when they feel protected, at home, and that they fit or have a sense of belonging.

One might see that children may create techniques to be able to manage their emotional responses thanks to changes, if professional practitioners pay close attention to the child's needs at an early age and build a positive relationship that demonstrates trust and security children can cope with transitions better which all lead towards a positive outcome.

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